

March 7, 2018

Re: HB 5487 Universal Medicaid Credentialing

Chairman Vaupel and Members of the House Health Policy Committee,

I am writing you, on behalf of the National Association of Social Workers – Michigan Chapter, to express **support for House Bill 5487** to create a universal Medicaid credentialing process. There are more than 24,000 licensed social workers in the State of Michigan. Social workers provide more than half of all mental health services in Michigan and across the country.

Many social workers own private and group practices and are quite familiar with the lengthy, costly, and redundant process of credentialing with Medicaid Health Management Organizations. Depending on the region, this process may have to be duplicated numerous times in order for the provider to accept all forms of Medicaid in their service area. It is a barrier to providing services for this population and a costly process that cuts into already low reimbursement rates for social workers.

While NASW-Michigan understands credentialing as a necessary administrative process, we welcome the opportunity to reduce redundancy, save costs, and in turn increase access to consumers. While it is understandably beyond the intent of this bill, we'd like to see the conversation expanded to include universal credentialing across all health insurers. While some of our Michigan insurers participate in a universal credentialing data source, most don't.

NASW-Michigan would like to take this opportunity to thank Representative Canfield for his work on this bill, as well as all of the members of the House CARES Task Force for the great work they've done trying to improve mental health services in Michigan.

It is our hope that all members of this committee vote yes on House Bill 5487.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Allan Wachendorfer, LMSW
Director of Public Policy
National Association of Social Workers – Michigan